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1969/02/14

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

1969

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE 1969C/MR

TO : S - The Secretary

THROUGH : J - Ambassador Johnson
S/S *FW*

FROM : EA - Ambassador Winthrop G. Brown

SUBJECT : Press Guidance for February 20 Warsaw Meeting
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

REVIEWED BY *1/15/69* DATE *5/8/8*
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DISCUSSION:

1. Starting with the first Sino-U.S. ambassadorial meetings in 1955, the two sides agreed that the content of the talks should remain confidential and that both of us would abstain from making public statements regarding the substance of our exchanges. Generally, we and the Chinese have adhered to this arrangement, although breaches by both sides have occurred sporadically over the years. Both sides acknowledge that circumstances sometimes require comment by one side or the other on the substance of the exchanges, however, and we have further refined our mutual understanding on questions of publicity to take this into account. As of now, it is agreed that if one side is going to reveal any details of a meeting it must inform the other side in advance, and we have insisted (as in the 131st meeting, September 7, 1966) that "in advance" means "more than a few minutes ahead of time". We interpret "in advance" to mean approximately 24 hours ahead of time, but we have not agreed on a precise period of warning.

2. We believe that it still is very much in our interest to continue treating the substance of our exchanges at the meetings as confidential and that U.S. spokesmen should continue to comment as little as practicable on any aspect of the meetings.

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Group 3

Downgraded at 12-year intervals;
not automatically declassified.

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3. The unusual press interest in the February 20 meeting requires especially careful control of U.S. official comment. We have prepared a draft press guidance for use following the meeting. This guidance would have spokesmen here and in Warsaw (a) refuse to comment on the substance of the meeting; (b) characterize the atmosphere of the meeting in only the most general terms; (c) if asked, confirm the identity of Ambassador Stoessel's assistants at the meeting; (d) announce the date of the next ambassadorial meeting; (e) if asked, acknowledge that a working level meeting was held February 21 at the Chinese Embassy in Warsaw to confirm agreed transcripts of the formal meeting. Supplementary guidance will be prepared as needed immediately following the February 20 meeting.

Attachment:

Draft press guidance.

EA/ACA:HETThayer^Q:ced;lgr
2/13/69

Clearances: EA/ACA - PHKreissberg
EA/P - Mr. Levine
P/ON - Mr. McCloskey
(subst)

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DRAFT PRESS GUIDANCE

February, 1969

(21)
135th Sino-U.S. Ambassadorial Meeting

QUESTION: Do you have any word on our meeting with the Chinese Communists in Warsaw?

ANSWER: The 135th Sino-U.S. ambassadorial meeting took place in Warsaw as scheduled February 20. It was held, as earlier meetings, in the Mysliwiecki Palace, and began at _____ and ended at _____. Ambassador to Poland Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., represented the U.S. side, and Charge d'Affaires Chen Tung (Chen is surname) represented the Chinese side. The two sides agreed that the next meeting, the 136th, would be held _____.

QUESTION: What was the result of the meeting? Are we encouraged by the Chinese attitude?

ANSWER: We have only just received a summary report of the meeting and of course will be studying it closely. As you know, however, we and the Chinese by mutual agreement treat the talks as confidential and we cannot discuss any details. I can say, however, that we find these meetings useful and are pleased to have met with the Chinese again after a 13-months interim (last meeting January 8, 1968). We welcome the Chinese agreement to meet again on _____. I can make no further comment.
(NOTE: A number of newsmen have learned of our proposal to the Chinese for a change of venue for the talks. If questioned about this, you should NO COMMENT it.)

QUESTION: Was this meeting longer or shorter than previous meetings?

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ANSWER:

I don't have precise records, but I understand that it was about the same duration as other meetings in recent years.

QUESTION:

We call them ambassadorial meetings but the Chinese did not have an ambassador there, is that correct?

ANSWER:

That's right. The Chinese representative was the Charge d'Affaires, the same as the last meeting. Ambassador John A. Gronouski represented us at the last meeting.

QUESTION:

Do we draw any conclusions from the fact that only a Charge was there for the Chinese?

ANSWER:

Of course we strongly believe that the talks should be continued between ambassadors, as originally contemplated, and we have in the past made this clear to the Chinese. Beyond that, we don't draw any conclusions. As you know, Peking is represented abroad by only one ambassador, in Cairo, at this time.

QUESTION:

In addition to Ambassador Stoessel, who else was present on the American side?

ANSWER:

The Ambassador was assisted by three American officers: an adviser, an interpreter and a note-taker.

QUESTION:

Would you identify them for us, please?

ANSWER:

The adviser was Paul H. Kreisberg, Acting Director of the Department's Office of Asian Communist Affairs. The interpreter was Donald M. Anderson, from the same office. The note-taker, assigned from our embassy in Warsaw, was _____. All three are Foreign Service Officers.

QUESTION:

Will you have anything to say later about the talks after you have studied the record?

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ANSWER: No. I wouldn't think so. As I have said, these talks are confidential and we intend to treat them accordingly.

QUESTION: You have described one session we held with the Chinese. Is this all? Did we meet with them this time only once?

ANSWER: Yes. There was, as usual, only one session of the ambassadorial meeting.

QUESTION: In the past, representatives of the two sides have met following the meeting to double-check the record of the ambassadorial session. Was there such a meeting this time?

ANSWER: Yes. (NOTE: Normally there is a working level session the day after the ambassadorial meeting, a session where each side double-checks the other's record of what was said by Ambassador Stoessel and the Chinese representative. You can confirm, if asked after it takes place on February 21.)

QUESTION: How long has this follow-up session been going on?

ANSWER: I think they have been having these after each ambassadorial session for the last three or four years.

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